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On the Economical, Social, Educational, and Political Influences of Competitive Examinations, as Tests of Qualifications for Admission to the Junior Appointments in the Public Service. By EDWIN CHADWICK, C.B.

[Read before Section F, Economic Science and Statistics, of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, at Dublin, 31st August, 1857.]

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I.—*Introduction.*

I CAME to Dublin on another subject, and I attended this meeting unexpectedly, and I am unprepared to submit, in a manner befitting such an assembly, the important question of Competitive Examinations as a systematised means of ensuring “an open and fair field, without favour,” for the capabilities of the country; but I endeavour to comply with the wish of some of your eminent professors—members of the Section—that I should open it for your consideration, and it most certainly involves large Economic elements which bring it legitimately within the province of the section for the promotion of Economic Science; for it will be found that it will affect powerfully, in the way of prevention, the failure and waste of those investments of capital made by every parent in the expenditure for the education of his child.

It will affect indirectly the security of commercial, and manufacturing, and other capital, by the increased means it affords of obtaining assured and trustworthy service. It affects directly the economy of the public capital, and has a politico-economical element in the prevention of the waste of the national expenditure, as I have elsewhere stated, in the employment of three comparatively ineffective and ill-conditioned servants to do the work of two better qualified, and better paid, and better conditioned—I might have said of two to do the work of four or more. It is a wrong to great principles to pass over the teachings of great events: and without entering into party politics, I may assert that the principle affects preventively such waste of capital from mal-administration as was displayed during the last War; which waste—and I speak from the

impressions stated to me by competent officers engaged in the examination of the past War Expenditure—may be justly set down as one-third, that is to say, twenty-five or thirty millions—a sum which I confidently aver, parenthetically, would have sufficed for the execution of the chief sanitary improvements of all the cities and towns in the three kingdoms, and to have effected an annual saving of life greater than was lost during the first year of the last war, or than any war in which the Empire has been engaged, and gone to a saving of from ten to twelve millions of capital annually sacrificed from lost labour, premature disability, excessive sickness, and multiplied funerals, from an amount of disease, reduced, if not absolutely prevented, in the newly-regulated common lodging-houses, and in very imperfect model dwellings.

If there shall be a fair inquiry into the causes of the waste of capital, by the rebellion and war now going on, and as to the means of the prevention of future waste of capital; if India shall for the future be made to pay its own expenses, the economical test of good administration,—if, indeed, that empire is to be held at all,—those who have given the most serious consideration to the subject agree,—it must be by a reformed and superior administration, and that reformed administration must comprehend as its basis the extended application of assured qualifications for the service, tested on the principle which forms the subject of my address.

II.—*Present state of the Question.—Progress made.*

And first, as to the latest statistics of the question available for the section.

I beg to premise, in submitting the numbers of the examination of the Civil Service Commissioners during the last year that these numbers are not of Competitive, but chiefly of *Pass* examinations, of the character of which I shall speak presently. It appears from the report of the Commissioners that the total number of candidates for admission to the Civil Service on whose cases they had adjudicated from the 31st of May, 1835, to the 31st of December, 1856, is 3,000. Of this number 60 were found to be not within the limits of age prescribed for admission; 12 were not physically competent for the duties of their situation; 10 failed to give satisfactory evidence of their fitness in respect to character; 99 were admitted without examination upon reports from heads of departments—a mode of admission open to fundamental objections—and 137 either declined to undergo the requisite examination or withdrew without completing it. Of the remaining 2,686 who were actually examined as to their knowledge and ability, 1,587 obtained certificates of examination, 886 were rejected as not qualified, and 219 were unsuccessful upon competition.

On the first adoption of the provision requiring examinations, there were loud outcries against the very difficult and unreasonable subject-matters propounded by the Commissioners for examination, and if the ingenuity displayed by some of the rejected candidates, in misrepresenting the causes of their rejection had been properly applied to the subject-matters of examination they might have achieved for themselves a better position; for those subjects, have in reality been so simple, that I am much mistaken if the advanced charity-school children of Ireland, in the good schools, would not deal with them successfully. Now, out of the whole number of 860 rejections, no less than 425 have been rejected for spelling *alone*, or with other subjects except arithmetic; 147 have been rejected for arithmetic *alone*, or with other subjects except spelling, and 263 have been rejected for spelling and arithmetic, with or without other subjects, "so that," say the commissioners, "only 65 have since the commencement of our duties been rejected for deficiencies not involving spelling or arithmetic, or both." It is to be observed, then, and should be borne in mind, that the great bulk of these examinations are only pass examinations, and those for a low standard of mental qualification. The Commissioners state, however, encouragingly on this subject—"Although in such of our examinations as are *not* competitive there is not the same stimulus which exists in competitive examinations, animating the candidate to display whatsoever talent he may possess applicable to the subject in which he is examined, yet we can state that great numbers of the candidates who succeed in obtaining certificates have passed very creditable examinations, and have shown themselves thoroughly acquainted with the prescribed branches of knowledge," implying the fact that under this mode of mere pass examination, persons have gained admissions who were *not* thoroughly acquainted with the very common elementary branches of knowledge prescribed.

In their first Report the Commissioners had stated—"we do not think it within our province to discuss the expediency of adopting the principle of Open Competition as contradistinguished from examination, but we must remark that both in competitive examination for clerkships in our own and other offices, those who have succeeded in obtaining the appointments have appeared to us to possess considerably higher attainments than those who have come in upon simple nomination, and we may add that we cannot doubt that if it be adopted as a usual course to nominate several candidates to compete for each vacancy, the expectation of this ordeal will act most beneficially on the education and industry of those young persons who are looking forward to public employment." In their last Report the Commissioners state that during the past year, 34 competitive examinations of candidates for junior situations have

taken place. "In these competitive examinations, however, the candidates competing for the respective appointments have, in most cases, not been sufficiently numerous to bring out all the satisfactory results which may be expected to arise from this system. It will be perceived from Table A, in the Appendix, that, disregarding the competitive examinations which took place in our office, and which we shall presently notice, in the 33 competitions there have been only 222 competitors proposed for 61 situations, and of these only 158 actually competed," that is to say, there were, on the average, only three nominated competitors for one place.

During the last year, it is to be observed that there were nominated and admitted to permanent clerkships, without competition, 577 nominated, and 310 admitted. Now it is to be observed that these arrangements are not in the sense of the recommendations of Sir Charles Trevelyan, of the Treasury, nor those of the late Mr. John Wood, the chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, nor of Mr. Bromley, of the Admiralty, nor are they calculated to abate these evils of patronage nominations, which it was the testamentary declaration of the late Admiral Sir Alexander Cockburn were the great detriment and opprobrium of his profession, against which Admiral Sir Baldwin Walker, with so much moral bravery, contended, nor, I apprehend do they accord with the views of distinguished officers in the Army, nor are they in the sense of the recommendations of Colonel Larcom, and most certainly they are against my own. But they are in the sense of Sir George Lewis, the avowed enemy of the principle, to whom its practical application has fallen. It is to be assumed that the expectation of the public was in accordance with our recommendations. I believe that it may be also assumed that the understanding of the public has been and is, that the resolutions adopted in Parliament have been in the sense proposed by us, and understood by the public, that the examinations should be upon Open Competition and not upon Nomination, and that the principle of Competitive Examination should be generally applied to the whole field of service.

The first resolution of the House of Commons, carried by Lord Goderich, 6th of April, 1856, was in the form of an address to Her Majesty "to make trial in the civil service of the method of *Open* competition as a condition of entrance." We shall see in what way the promise of compliance with this resolution has been performed.

In respect to the appointments without competition to the 310 places, a few examples may be given of the number of appointments to clerkships and higher offices, made without competition during the last year. in the larger departments of the State:—

	Patronage Nominations.	Admissions.
War Department	41	25
Admiralty	38	21
Inland Revenue.....	154	66
Post-office Clerks—London, Dublin, } and Edinburgh.....	51	31
Constabulary Offices, Ireland	211	113

Thus, there were only sixty-one situations, and those, I believe, at the instances of the more conscientious heads of Departments, given even in *nominated* competitions as against 310 given without any competition whatsoever. We must assume that these 310 mere Patronage admissions were given generally "without those considerably higher attainments" which the Commissioners attest are elicited by competition, and that the appointments have also been without "the stimulus which exists in competitive examinations, animating the candidate to display whatsoever talent he may possess applicable to the subject in which he is examined." In fact, the promise made as respects the application of the principle approved by Parliament and the public, it will be perceived, remains yet to be realized. The only cases in which proper competitions can be said to have been fairly opened, as contemplated by the public, are in the case of Cadetships for the Military Service, and in those only in the Engineers and the Artillery, and not for commissions in the Line. In the East India service there are competitive examinations for the appointments to writerships and medical appointments.

Erroneous as I believe the subject-matters of the present Indian Civil Service examinations to be in many respects, incomplete as may be the mode of conducting them,—they have, nevertheless, evolved elements of high educational, and social, and political import, which I shall subsequently specify, but first allow me to advert to some of the large common evils displayed in this same field of Indian Service, which open competition is calculated to meet. Before any deficiencies of the Civil Service had been made manifest during the last war, before the public mind had been aroused to the subject, Sir Charles Trevelyan, and other eminent civil servants, had represented the need of repairing those deficiencies, and had expressed matured views as to the means of doing so. For myself, I may claim to have expounded, a quarter of a century ago—(I did so indeed in an article, "The Administration of the French Charities," in the "London Review," for 1828, with which your Grace and the late lamented Dr. Arnold took a particular interest)—the principles now recognised, more particularly the principle of the open competitive examination, as the only efficient and trustworthy test of such qualifications as may be deemed requisite for admission to the public service, and I have invariably urged its practical adoption. My sub-

sequent experience, in which I have had passed through my hands the applications of between one and two thousand staff appointments, and have been employed in the business connected with the regulations of the expenditure of upwards of half a million per annum in twelve thousand local appointments, besides much business connected with local dismissals, has only confirmed more strongly my earliest impressions.

In respect to the Indian branch of our civil service, there are grounds for the expression of a confident opinion that the evils of the Rebellion now raging will, on a strict examination, be found to have been aggravated by the want of competent judgment and ability, consequent on mere patronage appointments, and defective administrative skill. A large proportion of the civil administrative functions have been exercised in India by young military officers, by boy officers, by administrators, of the qualifications of some of whom, indications are afforded by the low slang and most unseemly tone of their own published letters.

In respect to mere patronage appointments to direct commissions for the Indian army, an opinion may be formed of what they commonly were, from the results of the mere *Pass* examinations recently appointed. Thus, in the years 1851 to 1854, both inclusive, there were examined 437 candidates for direct Commissions in the Indian army. The candidates were generally the sons of gentlemen in high social position. Of this number, 234 failed to do common arithmetic, and 132 failed to spell their mother tongue. It was from the most accomplished civil servant of the East India service, my friend Mr. John Mill, that I obtained the recognition of the value of the competitive examinations, which he recommended in his evidence, and which he has so forcibly expressed in his paper laid before Parliament, with the other papers on the reconstruction of the civil service.

III.—*Indian Civil Service.—Evidence of Sir Charles Trevelyan.*

It was in India, the present field of disaster, and as a civil servant, that Sir Charles Trevelyan observed the great evils of mere patronage appointments, and became most anxious for the adoption of the principle of competitive examinations. You will find in his evidence on the India Bill in the year 1853, given with the measure and restraint of a public servant, the *under* statement and suggestion, rather than the development of matters of complaint, and forebodings of that state of insecurity of the service, which has recently been so widely and perilously manifested. He attests the fact that the men who failed in the college at Haileybury at home were, as a class, failures in the service in India. I cite his evidence as of important general application. He says:—"The

actual state of things at Haileybury in my time was this, and I believe it is so still.—The terms, that is, all who entered in one half year, consisted of from fifteen to twenty young men. There were generally three or four among them who gave themselves up entirely to study, and were very distinguished. There were a varying number, six, eight, ten, or twelve, as it might be, who obtained very fair advantage from the institution; but there was always a tail and fag-end of ‘bad bargains,’ reprobates, and professed idlers and men of pleasure. Now, these men were perfectly well known. They were as well known to the professors as they were to myself and to the other students, and that fag-end ought to have been cut off.” The Earl of Harrowby asks—“But they equally went out to India?” “The great majority of them went out. The cases in which the students were finally dismissed were very rare indeed.”

Now, it would surprise the meeting if they were informed of the extent of jurisdiction and power of life over the natives which fell to these “fag ends” and bad bargains. Sir Charles maintained that the competitive examination was the only trustworthy means for cutting off those same “fag ends.” His expressions on that subject were solemn, and I beg to recall them: “Looking at historical precedents, as well as the reason of the case,” continues the noble lord, examining, “do you think that the dominant race of the English in India would have still greater power and influence over the Natives than we now possess, if our officers went out so highly educated and accomplished as to be able to aid the natives, and lead the way in the prosecution of their physical well-being?” “They would have much greater power and influence, and probably the continuance of our dominion would be greatly extended. I may mention as an additional reason for having the ordinary securities for the proper appointment and training of military men, that they are selected in great numbers for civil and diplomatic appointments, and that in their individual character as Englishmen, each of them represents in a great degree the moral power of his country, and it is of the greatest importance that every Englishman in India, especially those in the service of the Government, should be as cultivated and well-conducted a man as possible, both for the continuance of our dominion and for the benefit of the natives. But, besides the new advantages to be attained by putting this important matter on a proper footing, much positive evil has to be obviated. Direct appointments to the Company’s army in India, as they are called—that is, appointments which enable young men to be sent out direct to India without any check except that of passing a slight examination—are much sought after as a convenient mode of providing for young men who, owing either to misconduct or incompetency, are unfit for the English professions. In other words, although the great majority of

the cadets are well-conducted and honourable young men, 'India is a sink towards which the scum and refuse of the English professions habitually gravitates.' "

This, let it be borne in mind, was said in 1853. Sir Charles continues:—"This is an abuse which can only be effectually prevented by extending the competing examination and special training to the whole body of the cadets, which would also be attended with this additional advantage, that it would give us a larger field of selection for the officers of the scientific corps. Another prevailing evil is, that when families are assured of appointments for their younger members, either in the civil or military services, they are apt to consider it unnecessary to give them an expensive education; and it will be found that the great majority of the young men so circumstanced have been educated at cheap proprietary or private schools, and not at those which are generally admitted to be our first-class seminaries. This can only be remedied by substituting competition for nomination; but the tests of superior fitness for the young men intended for the military service should, of course, be adapted to the career for which they are destined." "Viewing," asks the Earl of Harrowby, "the career of young men educated for India as a career not of contemplative philosophy, but of active and honourable exertion, do you not think that those additions to the course of instruction designed to fit them for the performance of all those active practical duties would be a great incentive to them in their studies, as well as tending to make them generally more useful to the country in which they are to serve?" "I have no doubt of it whatever. If that plan were carried out at Haileybury, it would be impossible for them to waste their time in debasing and enervating dissipation, the standard both of conduct and attainment would be raised, and the character of the civil service much improved. Although I have conscientiously given a high character to the Civil Service, we must not be misled by its present high standard into the supposition that it cannot be still further improved; for the truth is, that the influence of the circumstances in which the civil servants are placed in India is such, that unless they are very inferior indeed they must become respectably efficient. The Indian service is such a forcing system that it will make a man out of a block of wood." "Do you not also think that in proportion as we raise the standard of native education in India, it behoves us likewise, not merely as a matter of duty, but as a matter of expediency, with the view of maintaining our real supremacy, which is founded upon intellectual and moral superiority, concurrently and proportionately to raise and improve the character of our civil service?" "Yes, I entirely concur in that. I consider that we shall not acquit ourselves of this remarkable trust in the eyes of the nations of the

world, nor perform our duty to God, who gave it, unless we take that course." He adds, recalling to mind the young men who in his time composed the fag-ends at Haileybury, such examinations would have prevented their admission to the service, "because the best and most uniform test of good conduct is Diligence. The great duty of a young man is to pursue his studies with diligence so as to get the full advantage of the education provided for him. The idle and ignorant are generally the worst conducted, and habits of dissipation are necessarily accompanied with idleness. So that any system which keeps out the idle and ignorant will, in the great majority of cases, also keep out those of inferior moral character."

One of the most eminent military officers and administrators whom our Indian service has produced, General Jacob, whose own pre-eminent forecast has been proved in a paper, written some time ago, in which he endeavoured to arouse attention to the low and dangerous condition of the Bengal Native Army, enunciated emphatically in that paper the admonition, that all our power in India rests on every Civil Servant commanding the respect and regard of every native around him, a condition far from being achieved. "We may," he observes, "lay it down, as an absolute certainty, that the millions of natives which a handful of Englishmen govern in this vast continent will not consent to be governed by a handful of their *equals*. Our power consists in our being essentially different from them, and their belief in our moral superiority only. The only thing which can endanger the existence of this power is the destruction or weakening of this belief." These are becoming common conditions of power, position, and service, almost everywhere. At home the economical considerations which belong to our particular science forbid the continuance of the wasteful as well as unsafe practice of appointing several persons to perform a service on the chance that one of them may be found competent as well as willing to perform it decently. Abroad, in the conduct of our widely extending relations, as well in our colonies, as in that great field where, according to such testimony as that last cited, the disastrous consequences, not of "malfeasance" so much perhaps the administrative defaults of "misfeasance" and "nonfeasance" are now absorbing the public attention, the proportion of officers to the population governed must be few, and their action isolated and independent,—and there especially—it is of increasing importance that every individual forming a link of the administrative chain of connection, whether civil or military, should henceforward be carefully, and even severely tested, for the sake of the public security.

It may be stated, as the effect of the concurrent testimony of a number of civil servants, of the largest experience, given before the Russian War, that the civil administrative departments were rendered

insecure by corrupt Parliamentary and Political Patronage, and by being made the “sinks towards which the scum and refuse” of the cliques of boroughs habitually gravitates.* Upon the remonstrances

* The exposition of the effect of Patronage Appointments was unavoidably incomplete, in omitting any statement of their effect on the constitution and action of the House of Commons itself, and the barriers which the practice of such appointments interpose to the most important administrative reforms required in our time. Statesmen of the highest character and of different parties have viewed with the most serious alarm the evil effects to be apprehended from an extension of political patronage. The practice of making appointments for patronage still operates as a barrier to the improved administration of the Indian Empire. Thus Sir Charles Trevelyan states in the course of the above-cited evidence “I consider that there would be very great danger in putting the Government of India under the Government of England,” believing that, objectionable as the patronage appointments of the Company might be, those of the Government would be worse and more mischievous, in augmenting what he designated as the fatal detriment of the House of Commons, “the *evil principle*, which is known under many forms and names, party-patronage, favouritism, jobbing.” He thus adverted to the action of the evil principle. “The executive Government depends for its political existence and success upon the House of Commons. Each individual member of the House of Commons depends for his political existence and success upon his Constituents. Even in ordinary times the Executive Government and individual members of Parliament find it difficult to refuse favours which it is in their power to grant, however strong the reasons may be against granting them; and when parties are evenly balanced, or great questions have to be carried, or a Government has to be maintained in power, or an opposition has to be lifted into place, things are done in this country, in the face of our active public opinion, and free press, and freedom of exposure in Parliament—which show how much greater the evil would be if India were brought within the direct action of our party politics. I can mention instances in support of this view, which everybody will admit; instances of a large and general character, which cannot be questioned. “5184. Applicable to India do you mean? No, but showing that in its present state the Parliamentary Government of England is not a safe depository for the direct and immediate administration of the Government of India. The conclusion at which I arrive is this, that the English Executive Government and Parliament are not, in the existing state of public opinion, to be trusted with a direct, immediate, and ordinary action on the administration of India. But it may be hoped that the state of public feeling in this country will improve; society appears to be putting forth a remediable power, and measures are, I hope, being taken, to cut up this corruption by the roots,” meaning those measures for the introduction of the beneficent principle of open competitive examinations. “The evil principle,” as above defined, stands as a barrier to the improvement of the army, to the abolition of the purchase system and promotions for merit, as may be shown at length from the evidence given before the commissioners appointed to inquire into the purchase of commissions in the army, where the main objection urged to the abolition, was that the prospect of promotion for merit was illusory, as against the force of the foul influences above described. “The *evil principle*” operates also as a barrier to the improvement of the navy, and was described by the late Admiral Sir George Cockburn as the opprobrium of his profession. In illustration of the patronage appointments to that branch of the service, I may mention that a late distinguished naval officer, who himself during the war never saw an enemy’s vessel which he did not take, and who sat on a court-martial for the trial

made, the specification of qualifications was conceded, and then examinations as to those qualifications were admitted to be desirable, but the examinations proposed were merely pass examinations, and to these it is objected on considerable experience, that they are wholly illusory as securities.

Thus it is to be observed in the highly important testimony cited

of an officer for the loss of one of our frigates taken during the last American War, stated to me that on investigation, it appeared in that, as in almost every instance of loss during the same war,—the conflicts being between seamen of the same race, of the like bravery and power, with less of inequality in the force than was supposed, —had been clearly determined by the difference of skill in the commanders. The fact was that the American Commanders were chosen for their professional merit, from the best of the mercantile marine, and they handled their ships most ably, whilst our captains, very brave young men, but less skilled, were appointed not for professional skill but from political patronage; the contest being in reality between merit appointments and patronage appointments, and the nation lost by the latter, until the accident of one commander of merit, the captain of the *Shannon*, who trained himself and trained his crew, exhibited what might be expected from a better system. The more recent operation of the “evil principle” was displayed during the Dock-yard inquiry into the displacement of workmen appointed for merit by the Surveyor of the Navy, Sir Baldwin Walker, and by the interruption of the improvements in work, and of reductions of expenditure, by the substitution of workmen appointed for their votes for a particular member. The defence of the delinquent, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, was that he had only complied with the feelings of the House of Commons for such patronage, and with the common practice. The terms of the defence made for him by the then leader of the House, Mr. Disraeli, were as follows :—Evidence 4072. “When the late (Lord Derby’s) Government was formed, the Duke of Northumberland, from a high sense of public duty, and from a great love of the profession of which he is a member, was anxious that the Board of Admiralty should be formed as free as possible from what are called political influences. No obstacle whatever was made to the wishes of his Grace, and the Board of Admiralty was formed by his Grace, of very distinguished naval officers, with the sole object of establishing the efficient administration of that great branch, and the consequence” (*i. e.*, of that sole object,) “was, I have no hesitation in saying, that there was not that complete understanding between the Board of Admiralty and the House of Commons which had hitherto prevailed, and which, I have no doubt prevails with the present Board of Admiralty, and which has prevailed before the Government of Lord Derby prevailed.” The witness varies the phrases expressive of the complicity of large numbers of members of the House.—“Upon Mr. Stafford devolved entirely the representation” at the Board, “of the feeling of the House of Commons.”—“The Board of Admiralty, formed of able and efficient men, looked only to what they called the service.”—“And there was not that harmony which ought to exist between a branch of the Administration” (*i. e.*, and the executive, or the House). Chairman—Lord Seymour :—“You stated, did you not, that there was a want of understanding between the Board of Admiralty and the House of Commons?”—“Yes; I mean to say, that the Board of Admiralty looked merely to the efficiency of the service, and they thought their only duty was, to consider the efficiency of the service; but they did not understand sufficiently the spirit of our Parliamentary Government, and that, in conducting affairs, they must consider the temper of the House of Commons; that temper

in respect to the pupils especially prepared at Haileybury for the East India service, that an instance of the final dismissal of any of the constant "tail," and fag-end of "bad bargains," "reprobates and men of pleasure," "men perfectly well known;" "as well known to the professors as they were to the other students," was extremely rare indeed, and that the great majority of them went out to India and were charged with the exercise of powers there. I venture to assert, on avowals made to me by eminent examiners in medicine and in various educational institutions, that it may be taken as a general fact, that in the system of Pass Examinations, rejections are extremely rare, however frequent may be the failure of the strict or due proof of qualifications for being entrusted with the care of the lives and limbs of the population. The general avowal I have met with is to the effect, "one feels it to be a serious injury to a family to reject a candidate on whose education they have spent much money, and one cannot help being indulgent." Captain Basil Hall mentions the compunctious avowal of a pass examiner for naval commissions, that from regard to the interests of a family, he had passed a young man with a lenient examination. The examiner heard afterwards of the loss of the ship and all on board, possibly or probably from some error of navigation, under the command of the officer whom he had examined; and he (the examiner) could not help feeling compunctiously that the loss of all the lives was due to the exercise of the narrow sympathies and the lenient pass examination.* And with the mere pass examination they (the examiners)

is represented now, and has been represented before, by several members of the House of Commons, also members of the Board." "Your lordship, and the Committee, must know that these are things which are necessary to be done, and to be clearly understood." "Of course, I can easily understand that the various members supporting the Government, looking to the fair distribution of patronage, which has been referred to by one of the Honourable Members may have pressed, and I dare say, did press, Mr. Stafford, and that he found he was in a position in which he could not fairly satisfy their wishes." "This would lead to misunderstandings. There is no doubt, as every member of this Committee must know, that every party who supports the Government, whether they are in the House of Commons or out of it, naturally look to what is called a fair distribution of the patronage; and, I dare say, that may have led, under such circumstances, to misunderstanding." —4081. In the face of this declaration nothing was done by the House to rebut the charges here made against it.

* The inefficiency of the mere pass examination, either for the protection of the pupils or of the public, is displayed in such facts as the following, stated in evidence before the Commission of Inquiry into the purchase of commissions in the army. Thus, Colonel Lord West, C B., states: "When I was commanding a regiment before Sebastopol, from sickness and casualties the number of duty officers became very small, and I then urgently requested that some of a number of young officers who were kicking their heels at the dépôt might be sent out at head-quarters forthwith. I received ten of those young officers in a batch who did not know their right hand from their left, and

avow that it cannot be expected that much lenience will not prevail in favour of the parties present, at the expense of the unknown and

had never been drilled ; I was obliged to send them to the trenches to different points in command of parties of 30 or 40 men, much as I objected to leave such parties under the command of such very young subalterns. All that I could do with those officers was this : I sent the adjutant on parade, and told him to show them how to march their men off the ground. All that I could say to them was this : If the enemy comes on, hold your ground and drive them back if you can. In such a case much was left to the steadiness of the non-commissioned officers and the old soldiers," 2515. He states that some of these officers had received their commissions from the college at Sandhurst ; he thinks the system there must be defective, and for its cure considers a system of competitive examination previous to admission into college might be established here as in France. Question—Sir Harry D. Jones : " The commanding officers of other regiments experienced the same difficulties and disappointments ? " " I have heard the same complaints made by numerous commanding officers." —Another officer, Colonel T. Harte Franks, C.B., gives evidence of similar experience in another field of service : " I think on going into field at first both our infantry and our cavalry appear to a very great disadvantage. I am speaking generally of our young officers ; I have seen two armies in the field, as fine armies as ever I saw, and I saw one battle disorganize them ; I do not think there was a good system. I have served in the Punjaub campaign, and I served in the campaign in the Sutlej, and in both instances I saw those armies completely disorganized. I have heard foreigners who were in the field remark on their condition, and the Prince of Prussia, who was serving with us, also made a remark upon it." Sir De Lacy Evans : " The regiments were disorganized, were they ? "—" Yes, perfectly." Chairman : " Are you alluding to British regiments ? "—" Yes ; they fell into a state of looseness, in consequence of the officers not learning previously to the war their duty, which would have been perfected by the experience of the war." Sir Harry D. Jones : " Do you mean to say that the General Officers knew nothing about their business ? "—" No ; I did not say anything about them. Very often commanding officers did not do their duty." In answer to further questions, he states : " I will repeat what I heard at the battle of Moodkee ; I was not present at the time ; I came up after the battle of Moodkee, but I was at the battle of Sohraon. The Prince Waldemar of Prussia expressed himself astonished and surprised at the want of discipline in our army in the field. He said that all our infantry fired in the air. I was particularly struck with the looseness and disorganized state in which our army was."—" I think it originated in the officers not being properly instructed ; they were the bravest men in the world, but they did not know their duty as they ought to have done in going into the field, and the consequence was that those regiments and brigades went to pieces, because our army is an army of battalions, which it ought not to be, and our officers are not instructed generally speaking as they ought to be." He expresses an opinion as to the superiority of the French system, but he declares that " You cannot have a good army until merit is fairly rewarded." Evading the evidence as to the applicability and the potency of the competitive examination, the Right Hon. E. Ellice, the member for Coventry, and one of the Commissioners, puts scoffing questions at the supposition of promotion for merit, and assumes the potency of " the evil principle " as a barrier. " Do you not think," he asks of the witness, " that money, parliamentary influence, aristocratical influence, and various other influences, would be brought to bear upon selection, if no system of purchase existed ?—As long as these influences exist to which you allude, the officers without them could only trust for quick promotion to purchase ;" but he adds that these ought not to be.

absent public. The abstract sense of duty is of no avail as against interests which are in the easy performance of service with the least trouble and occasion of present dissatisfaction. In proof of the professional sense of the essential insecurity of the pass examination, I might adduce the practice of Re-examination, any diplomas notwithstanding, when medical men have to make appointments, such as to dispensaries, in which they have interest and authority. So untrustworthy have the mere pass examinations been found to be, that amongst medical men themselves examiners of experience contemplate the introduction of competitive examinations in the appointment of officers as a means of improving the medical institutions of England, and protecting them from the increasing evils of mere patronage appointments.

IV.—*Effects of Open Competition.—Experience in France.*

Now, it is of the essence of the examination, for the principle of which we contend,—that of Full, Open, and Free Competition,—that in proportion to the openness and the publicity, and the number of the competitors, it forms the best practicable security—it may be said the only available practicable security against either undue laxity or the exercise of narrow sympathies on the part of the examiners, for it brings to the examination the security of publicity, and the attention of an intelligent and intensely interested public ; of which public are the competitors, who, although they may be under the influence of illusions as respects themselves, are by no means bad judges as respects third parties, who are competitors. With them come their adult friends ; but, over and above all, there come teachers, tutors, professors, interested, no doubt, in the judgment upon their pupils, most capable of controlling and exercising a decisive control upon the judgments in relation to third parties. In France there are, perhaps, the only extensive trials of the principle of competitive examinations, which has there been in operation for many years ; and an examiner there assured me, as a common fact belonging to these examinations, that the security for integrity and strictness was complete. Indeed, the operation of the securities is felt to be onerous by the judges. One of them assured me that such was the effect of the interests brought to bear upon a full, open, and large competition, that if he, if any one, were disposed to be unjust, or were thoroughly corrupt, he dared not be unjust,—he was stringently obliged to strive to be manifestly just. The open notification which informs lone parents and lone students, and remote educational institutions, of the opportunity—which we contend is their right, as well as the right of the State to high and rare talent, wheresoever it may be found,—also constitutes an important security to the public for the integrity and completeness of the preparations, and for the elevation of the class

of competitors—by deterring those who are consciously weak on important points,—by frustrating sinister and narrow combinations; for who can tell from what unknown quarter and to what point powerful competition may come?

Open, and duly notified competition was the principle gained in the case of Indian Appointments, and in despite of much sinister writing and opposition, adopted by the public, and expressly sanctioned by the first resolution carried in Parliament, compliance to which was promised by the Government, but the competitions adopted are in a totally different and repugnant principle, namely of close private and departmental competitions, in patronage nominations. I had myself previously objected “on merely departmental arrangements for examinations to fill vacancies which occur occasionally, not only will the duties of examinations be thus performed in general—and at the best they are performed in manners which, as compared with the systemized procedures, are scarcely deserving of being called examinations—but the means of performing them in the most efficient manner practicable will be wanting. The notification of vacancies and the choice of candidates must usually be restricted from the wide range of attraction of the general service to the narrow circle of the personal connexions, or the knowledge of the chief officers of the departments. Moreover, departmental nomination by itself would only be one form of patronage. By preparation and watching for opportunities when the field appears clear of more eligible candidates, offices may frequently be almost made family heritages, as against the claims of the service itself and the public.” Members of Parliament have said to me, “We very much like your new plan, Mr. Chadwick!” “Indeed, and why?” The ingenuous answer has been in several instances, “because we get more patronage. We get not only the credit of the one nominee appointed, but of all who are nominated, and the commissioners get the discredit of the rejections.” My reply has been that “if you had done me the honour to read my paper you would have seen that this mode of examination is neither very new nor that of any other officer of the civil service whose opinion was taken, and who recommended the adoption of efficient tests of qualification as the basis of reformed administration.” On the question of principle, I may cite the subsequent confirmatory testimony of the Commissioners appointed to examine into the best means of re-organizing the training of officers for the Scientific Corps,—testimony given after an examination of the chief schools on the continent. They state—“Among the prominent facts of Military education abroad, particularly in France, is the energy which a system of competition carried out consistently in the entrance no less than the other examinations,—imparts to the whole teaching

of those schools in which it is adopted. A system of mere nomination on the contrary, however conscientiously worked, has always a tendency to lower the standard of examination; for as Colonel Portlock has forcibly argued, what favour would it be to a powerful applicant to give a nomination on the one hand, and to cancel it on the other by too stiff an examination?"

By opponents of the principle of open competition,—more particularly I must say by some who are notorious partakers of political patronage for themselves or their families, and who assume the guise of superior information, and the exercise of a disinterested and moderating wisdom, in behalf of the nomination examinations, by which the patronage may be retained and conveniently extended,—representations are perseveringly made, that the principle of open competitive examinations is proposed as complete and sufficient in itself for every purpose; and these representations are made in the face of somewhat elaborate expositions to the contrary. By Sir Charles Trevelyan and myself, and, I believe, most other civil servants who have advocated the open competitive examinations, they have been confined to the Junior Appointments, and we have assumed prolonged and careful probation of the application of the qualifications after appointment — probations beyond those which exist or are contemplated under the system of patronage appointments, or nomination examinations. In the scheme of the competitions for the East India Service, it was provided that those who succeeded in the first competition, should have another probationary examination in the specialities of the service, within two years, but the authorities have chosen to make direct appointments, dispensing with this probation. It is in the usual course that failures will occur, and be attributed to the new system. The senior appointments to higher positions or of speciality will properly be of cases where the individual's professional career—as a lawyer, for example—will have been a prolonged competitive examination and probation.

I need scarcely observe here that the question as I have been enabled to submit it to the Section is wholly independent of the subject-matters of the examination, which might comprise either any of the absurd disquisitions of the schoolmen on the one hand, or subjects of the highest order of practicability on the other. In my view much of the subject-matters adopted, is objectionable on the score of inutility, and I consider that they ought to have a more practical direction.

The question assumes the previous ascertainment of moral qualifications. It assumes also the possession of physical qualifications. In the debate on the important question of the application of the principle of open competition to admissions to commissions in the Army, one of the old generals talked depreciatingly of the mental

qualifications, or "clerk work," and gave an instance where an officer failed, when surrounded by enemies, and was put to it, to exercise his bodily prowess—the prowess which belongs to the ranks. But that General should have been reminded that Buonaparte made military schools and open competitive examination the test of the mental qualifications for admission to his army, and that he so advanced the intelligence of his officers as to bring up men of inferior physique, small men like himself, to be more than a match for men of greater bodily power. As noted in the report of the Commissioners on the training of the scientific corps, he was wont to speak of the Polytechnic school, the field of the most systematised applications of the principle of competitive examinations, as "the hen that laid him golden eggs." As observed, however, by Mr. Sydney Herbert,—the bodily qualifications may be included in the competitive examinations, too and I have no doubt that the youth of Ireland, such as I see here at the University, would not be backward at the tasks he proposes, of showing how they could get over five Leicestershire fences, or trying a fall, or taking up the foils.

In the face of the common experience of our Universities and Collegiate Institutions, where for one who injures himself by overwork in competition for prizes, dozens notoriously injure themselves by habits which fair mental work would prevent, apprehensions are professed to be entertained of dire consequences from the overworking of the brain, in competitions, even in such elementary subject-matters as those on which it is proved by the statistics, which I have adduced,—that the great bulk of the failures take place in spelling and arithmetic!

In respect to the more popular and elementary instruction of the very young, I shall myself be prepared on some opportunity to adduce evidence of the expediency of reducing the usual time of sedentary application, and the practicability of substituting for it much bodily or industrial occupation, without detriment to mental progress. But in respect to the highest order of mental application—to pure mathematics, it will be found that the objection to which I refer is disposed of by the experience of the Polytechnic itself, of which the Commissioners state that, "Regarded simply as a great mathematical and scientific school, its results in producing eminent men of science have been extraordinary. It has been the great, and truly great, mathematical university of France." The students are, I apprehend, in physique, below the average of British students; and their competitions, instead of being at the end of a term, are incessant. A record is kept of the studies, of which the Commissioners say,—“The student, it would seem, must feel that he is gaining or losing in his banking account, so to call it, by every day's work. Every portion of his day's studies will tell directly for or

against him in the final competition in which so much depends." And now as to the apprehended bodily results:—"Cases of over-work," add the Commissioners, "no doubt occur, as in the early training for every profession; but, following the evidence we have received, we have no reason to think them so numerous as to balance the advantages of vigorous thoughtful study, directed early towards a profession which, however practical, is eminently benefited by it."

V.—Results of Open Competition as hitherto applied.

Having set forth the main elements constituting the principle in question, I now beg leave to submit to attention such Statistics as I have at hand bearing upon its application.

It is to be remembered that the Civil Service Commissioners' Report sets forth the fact, that after all there were only 61 public appointments which had been conceded to the semblance of a competition,—competition confined to nominated or patronage appointed competitors, averaging three for each place. No more than one competition having the semblance of an *open* competition, in compliance with the terms of the resolution of Parliament and the public understanding, have the Commission to report! The Commissioners were allowed the privilege of appointing the clerks for their own office. The appointments allowed to them were of four clerks, three of them junior clerkships, with salaries of £100 per annum, rising by £10 per annum to £200 per annum; and a fourth, a senior clerkship, with a salary of £200 per annum, rising by yearly instalments of £15 to £300 per annum. The Commissioners attest their own respect for the public opinion in behalf of open competitions by subjecting these four to it; that is to say, four out of four hundred for an open competition, if that can be said to be open in which there was, as stated by them, no public notification by advertisement, but only a notice to a few friends or persons connected with colleges whom they happened to meet. Yet, instead of only some three for each place, there were more than eleven, or forty-six for the four.

Whilst the officers of some departments were being disgusted almost to revolt, by the lower and lower social position and bankrupt character of the persons sent to be associated with them upon nominations as political patronage, a vast deal of alarm was affected and expressed, at the risk of an influx of "low people," if competitions were opened to qualifications—of advanced education and scholarship! As if to allay such alarm, the Commissioners are careful to set forth the indications of the social position of the candidates, brought forward by the daring innovation of an approach to an open competition for four clerkships.

Amongst these candidates there were :—

Seven sons of Clergymen.	One son of a Colonial Judge.
Two sons of Dissenting Ministers.	One son of a Professor of a University.
Eight sons of Gentlemen.	One son of a Commander of the Coast Guard.
Two sons of Magistrates of Police Courts.	One son of a Chief Clerk in a Government Office.
Two sons of Surgeons.	One son of a Lieutenant-Colonel.
Two sons of Lieutenants in the Royal Navy.	

Others have been in indefinite occupations.

Seven in Mercantile Houses.	Three in Government Offices.
Two in Banks.	Two in Public Companies.
One in a Public Board.	

Twenty-five had finished their education at Universities.

Sixteen had been educated at large Public Schools, or well-known Grammar Schools, and five at Private Schools exclusively.

The Commissioners state, as this result of this open competition, that its advantages have not been confined to the successful candidates. "In various instances the unsuccessful candidates have shown themselves positively competent for official employment, and have, in consequence of the opportunity thus given them of showing their competency, obtained other appointments."

After remarking on the high class of education displayed by the competitors for these subordinate places, the Commissioners observe— "We are anxious that our object in making this detailed statement should not be misunderstood. We are well aware that the various extra accomplishments of those gentlemen do not bear directly on their duties as clerks under this commission, although they show habits of industry and an amount of mental cultivation which cannot fail to enhance their general qualifications for official service. The facts which we thus bring forward with relation to the competition of clerkships for this office are intended to show that if opportunities were more easily and generally afforded than at present" [when, in truth, they cannot be said to be now afforded at all for the civil service,] "for persons to compete for situations of the like character, a highly-instructed class of industrious young men would present themselves as candidates. We must add, in justice to the four gentlemen who received appointments in this office, as a consequence of the competition we have described, that they have passed the period of probation to our entire satisfaction, and have proved themselves to possess aptitude for official duties, and most creditable habits of regularity and industry."

Looking at the public understanding of the question of Open Competitions, at the previous examples of the notified competitions for writerships and cadetships, which governed that understanding,

looking at the terms of the first resolutions of the House of Commons, and the promised fair compliance with its spirit, I must be pardoned for expressing a doubt whether Lord Palmerston can be aware of the manner in which the principle of competitive examinations has been applied, or of the small proportion which even the nominated and selected, and, in fact, packed competitions, bear to the whole mass of examinations, that the promise has, in fact, been entirely evaded. The solitary case cited, in which the Commissioners clearly indicate their own opinion, as to the broad principle sanctioned by the public, has not occurred at the instance of the Government, but of the commissioners. There has really been little more done for the civil service than the solitary instance of the competition for four places thus described by the commissioners! The nominated and private competitions, if they be really competitions, to vacancies which are unknown, are closed for Ireland, for Scotland, and the rest of the kingdom. There are 37,000 persons engaged in the Civil Service of the nation. What the annual vacancies are, no member has been at the pains to ascertain for the public. The vacancies to situations of an inferior character ranging from 50% to 80% per annum, and applicable to prize scholarships for the inferior schools, may be stated at between six and seven hundred per annum. Besides, there are, or were at the time of the Census, 10,000 officers of the Army, and 9,480 officers of the Navy. Consider the influence of the junior appointments to the vacancies in such numbers on the education of the country!

I now beg leave to revert to the Economical Elements, private as well as public, which it appears to me are involved in the extended application of the principle for which we contend, in the increased securities derivable from it, for those investments of capital made by the head of every family for the education of his children. The different results of education in different members of the same family, the sense of the grievous loss of time by inferior or misdirected tuition, which is a frequent subject of complaint, especially in the middle ranks of society; the large and gross failures which have hitherto been presented in the education of the lower classes, all create great mistrust of School education, as means for the attainment of desired ends.

To revert to the statistics which I have given of the large proportion of rejections on mere pass examinations for commissions in the Indian Army. From the declared rank of the parents of the candidates, as gentlemen and persons in good social position, I think there can be no reasonable doubt that the education of the whole of the candidates had been paid for—highly paid for—by the parents. Sir C. Trevelyan has been led to infer the cheapness of the education by the results; but, although some of it might have been given

in private schools, most of it would, I apprehend, have been of an expensive character. Yet the expense had been incurred in vain. The test of the mere pass examinations proved that in more than half the cases of rejections on a low standard of qualifications, there was almost a total wreck of the hopes of the family, and an irretrievable loss of the youth's time and the parent's money. His own evidence, which I have cited in respect to the failures;—"the tail and fag ends, the bad bargains,"—I think, display very common educational elements. Out of some fifteen or twenty young men, there were, he says, generally three or four who gave themselves to study, and were very distinguished; that is to say, distinguished from mediocrities, and absolute, and disgraceful failures. In these instances there was, perhaps, an expensive payment for education, yet with what uncertain results? Of the three or four who succeeded, who, from the small minority of merit, it will generally be found that their success is due to previous training, and though commonly held forth as the result of the system, they are the results of circumstances accidental to it, whilst the majority of low mediocrities, and a large proportion, if not the whole, of the bad bargains, and the "wastrels," in the public service as in the school, are due to the system, or to preventible circumstances by which the motives of the pupils are perverted, their fair conditions for instruction destroyed, and the labours of the education frustrated. For myself, from observation of the results of the different modes of education, upon the poorer classes, I have derived a strong faith and confidence in educational power, applied under the direction of available experience, to the elevation of all classes, and the results of some of the first competitive examinations which I have looked at with much interest, appear to me to be pregnant with important educational, moral, and economical promise.

From examiners, and also from professors engaged in the education of the very classes who are affected by the operation of the competitive system of examination for appointments in the East India Company's service, I have been informed that, even under the very limited extent to which the change of system has been carried, it has been attended by social improvements of a very high order, conducive to the morals, the security, the prosperity, and the repose of families.

The operation of the change is manifested in various forms in different families. I will mention one case, as it was mentioned to me by a professor, not, indeed, as a particular case, but as an A B C case, illustrative of the working of common elements. It is that of an eminent, and wealthy, and respected city merchant, who is a large holder of East India stock, always voting with the House authorities, and who has a family of sons, one of whom was to have

had a writership, another a cadetship, and a third a medical appointment. They were, however, all "fast" young men about town, varying only in the rates of fastness, neglecting tutors and home studies, out nearly all day and all night, coming home late in the morning, disturbing and distressing the father, and grieving their mother, who was wishing them out to their distant appointments—there, be it observed, to exercise command over multitudes of others before they had in any fitting degree obtain command over themselves. But why should those young men be expected to attend to tutors or to study, being assured by their father's respectability and influence with the directors that they would obtain the appointments without the qualifications to be gained by study? What need had they to allow themselves to be bored by tutors and forego the pleasures of youth? But before the "fast" course could be run out, and the patronage appointments gained, competitive examinations are instituted, and patronage is abolished. Speedily they see the fastest of their companions precipitated the fastest to the bottom of the list, and they see the appointments carried off by competitors from strange places, from Ireland, and from no one knows where, except they do not come from circles where the appointments had heretofore been deemed a vested right.

Moreover, it has already been observed that some of the successful competitors tested morally by their industry and steadiness, as well as intellectually by the competition, having had their general respectability duly verified, being now by their success assured of appointments and competent means, are as a natural and legitimate consequence favourably received and regarded in families and society, and are formidable competitors for prizes of another class. "He," says Sir James Stephens, "whose name shall stand at the head of the competition list, will, I admit, possess these humbler virtues (*i. e.*, intelligence and the steadiness of methodical men of business), because in youth good scholarship for the most part implies good character; but he will also be found to be a man of more than average self-possession, promptitude, address, resource, and hopefulness." And such, I should be prepared to expect, would be the characteristics of those who gain the highest places from Ireland and elsewhere. But observing this change, the fast young men of the merchant's family stay their career. Those who were careless at their studies, who wearied and disgusted their tutors, are now becoming attentive and interested, and are found to have good natural capacities for studies for which they before declared they had no genius, and their tutors, who were bores, are becoming revered men. Time must be allowed to these victims of the patronage system to hark back and make up for past fastness, but there is fair promise of some of them becoming eventually successful competitors. As

attention to study increases, disorder diminishes, and peace and confidence are gained by the change to the merchant's family. The system which insures to the State a good and safe officer tends to insure to the private family a good member and a sure support. To what did the merchant owe his own position but to open competition in an open profession? In basing the future of his house upon patronage, he based it upon a quicksand liable to be removed by every change of party. The transience of commercial houses (as will be found from the dereliction of the principles to which they owe their rise) is proverbial. The beneficent elements described will be found to operate to the repose and security of the highest families as well as to those of the middle classes. It may be commended, as in the interest of the highest aristocracy, that for purely domestic reasons, they should place their children under the security of the test, and that since all of them cannot, under existing circumstances, obtain public appointments, the choice of those of them who do should be determined by the test of the aptitudes by which the position of the class will be most securely maintained and probably advanced. In this competition they will hold their own. As it is, indeed, I believe it will in candour be conceded that plain "Mr. John Russell" would, as such, have won a position not dissimilar to that which he now holds, which, in truth, is under competition. I believe it will be acknowledged that if the head of the present House of Derby were at the bar as "Mr. Stanley," he would have been a brilliant *nisi prius* advocate, and have won, under the sharpest competition, a high position at the bar; and undeterred by his presence, I may assert there is one who, as Mr. Howard, would have yet had a great, acknowledged, and benign influence in the country.

The elements of disturbance, and of the frustration of academical labours by the influence of patronage, have been displayed in classes as well as separately in individual cases. What were the frequent and scandalous rebellions and disorders of our Military Schools but rebellions against studies by youths who were assured of their commissions by patronage, that is to say, without labour for qualifications?

The wife of the principal of one of these schools expressed lately to a friend her joy at the improvement which had taken place in her husband's domestic condition. Formerly he had come home dissatisfied, care-worn, and anxious, his rest was constantly disturbed at night, and his health was failing; but now the students behaved so well that his cheerfulness of temper was restored, his rest was undisturbed, and his health was improving. The behaviour of the students was so altered, their nature seemed to be so changed, that she knew not what had come over them! Why, pestilent Political Patronage had been reduced, and Competitive Examinations had come over them, and their interest in their studies had been restored!

From Dr. Kirkpatrick, principal of the excellent school, the Albert Agricultural Institution at Glasnevin, I have a copy of a letter to him from Mr. Patterson, his assistant, containing testimony of the like effects from the introduction of the competitive system for prizes for good service ;—the power of the incentive is recognized in every department. “There is a decided increase in the application given to their studies, and in the skill with which the farm operations are carried on,” and in the good order of the institution.

VI.—*Evidence afforded by Founders’ Endowments in Scotland.*

Though it may be new to the public and to a large proportion of the persons interested in educational institutions, I am enabled to adduce the evidence of a century of experience of the salutary working of the element which we wish to make generally prevalent in academical studies and discipline. In the course of my official service, in which I have had to serve with able men and natives from each kingdom, it has so happened that I met with able Scotchmen in disproportionately large numbers from one part of Scotland, namely, from Aberdeen. Mr. Robert Chambers here tells me that in the course of the compilation of an historical work, he was surprised to find how many eminent men came from that part of the country. I am now about to point out to you a local institution, to the influence of which that extra crop of able men is distinctly traceable. It appears that in the Colleges of Aberdeen there are numerous Bursaries or Scholarships; one class, patronage bursaries; the other and the larger class, in greater proportion than elsewhere, bursaries obtainable by open competition of the whole country.

I am authorized by professors there in stating, as the result of prolonged experience, that, as a class, the pupils of the patronage bursaries are the plague of the professors,—whilst the pupils who come in by open competition are, as a class, distinguished by qualities which make the labours of the tutors with them peculiarly satisfactory. So important were the two antagonistic elements found to be that they were made chief topics of the investigations of the Commissioners appointed in 1826, for inquiring into the state of the Universities and Colleges of Scotland, and who made their report in 1832. In this report the Commissioners, amongst whom were the Earl of Aberdeen and several of the Scottish peers, the patronage scholarships are unanimously condemned as nuisances which ought to be abolished, Founders’ wills notwithstanding. They say, “It cannot be thought an undue interference with the free disposal of property to regulate the application of funds left for the benefit of national institutions. If we are right in thinking that the great number of small bursaries in at least three of the Universities has had prejudicial effects upon the character of those Universities, there

cannot be any objection to the interference of the legislature ; for, as the Universities are national establishments, it must be right to restrain any interference by private persons which may tend to defeat the objects for which they are instituted."

They add, "It is not the number of such bequests which is to benefit the Universities, but the manner in which they are applied ; and a few endowments instituted upon sound views will produce much more beneficial effects than a great number of donations applicable to every purpose which the imperfect views, or perhaps the caprice of individuals may suggest. Whatever view may be taken of the subject we now advert to, there can be no doubt whatever as to the propriety of the Bursaries which at present belong to the Universities, being bestowed as the reward of merit and after public examination or free competition. Of late years very great improvements have been adopted in the Universities of Aberdeen and St. Andrews as to the disposal of the bursaries and the examinations of the persons holding them, and the professors have already had opportunities of witnessing the good effects resulting from these changes. But there are still many bursaries in several of the Universities which are not awarded after competition, or upon any proper principle. A variety of bursaries are bestowed by the Court of Exchequer, in consequence of grants authorized by King William, and at other periods ; these are at present bestowed upon the application of individual professors or others. It is quite obvious that these bursaries should be awarded in a very different manner." So marked is the contrast of the operation of the antagonistic elements, so strong is the feeling of the injurious effects of the mere patronage appointments to scholarships, that in many instances, as I am informed, they have been suppressed, without any legal warranty, and the open competitive principle applied by the force of opinion. It has also been extended to schoolmasterships, and to some of the highest professorships.

I might adduce yet further evidence to prove that the majority of educational failures, which speaking here economically, I trust, as the losses of investments of capital, are due, not to perverse and uncertain natures, but to defective institutional arrangements. But the late experience of the working of the competitive examinations for appointments in the civil service of the East India Company which displays elements of progress, which I would most respectfully submit to the governors of our chief educational institutions, as of vast importance to them.

In respect to some of the educational institutions for the Poorer Classes, of which I have had at times official cognizance, it has always appeared to me to be a disadvantage of the schoolmaster, that his pupils disappear in the wide world, and that he has only few and accidental means of observing the particular effects of his labours upon them

in after life. To obviate this defect, I have in some instances got visits made to the employers of children, and questions put, as the experience of deficiencies in service, which improvements in education might for the future prevent. The facts ascertained, by these enquiries were fraught with important suggestions for the practical improvement of education. The heads of colleges and educators of the highest class, especially in the provinces, have appeared to me to be under similar disadvantages, leading a cloistered life away from the active world, and out of the way of particular observation of the results of their labours on the after lives of their pupils.

Now the extension of the principle of public competitive examinations appears to me to be of vast importance for the efficient and satisfactory direction of the educational labours in colleges and universities to the world's actual needs of practical service of duty as well as of accomplishment. For the East India Company's service a programme of the educational requirements for officers of the first-class in the civil service, including befitting mental accomplishments as well as the qualifications special to the offices having been laid out on a direct view of the public demands, the heads of Trinity College, Dublin, as it appears to me have set a valuable example by the appointment of a special committee for adopting courses of tuition to meet them. One of the prize competitive scholars of Aberdeen, a young man of remarkable power, was a competitor for one of the high offices put up to competition in the Company's service; but he found that the course of instruction given at his own college, at Aberdeen, did not enable him to complete his preparation, and he was obliged to get it completed elsewhere; I believe at London University College, and at Cambridge also, and he succeeded. Such experience of the insufficiency of existing academical courses to suit the changed conditions of the world, and of the advantages of the new administrative arrangements in keeping the heads of colleges early and authentically informed of them, so that loss of time and money and the hopes of families may be prevented, will not I trust be lost upon the directors of the education of Scotland, or those of Great Britain generally. Competition between colleges and schools will, I submit, be as salutary as well regulated competitions between individuals. Besides giving our superior educational institutions the direct information which is so useful for their guidance, the new principle will enable them and also the public at large to determine their position relatively to each other. The interest which such competitions as have already taken place, excites, promises moreover to our chief educational institutions, the stimulus of academical Derby days.

The important experience of Aberdeen in respect to the compe-

titive scholarships, shows that the beneficial operation of the principle will not be confined to the superior institutions. In Aberdeenshire it is perceived that the pupils of particular masters of private preparatory schools, obtain more of the college prizes than the pupils of other schoolmasters. The schoolmaster of the most successful pupils being marked out by this test is sought after by parents, and commonly by parents who have no intention of sending their children to college. Wealthy parents who have no need of the eleemosynary scholarships, nevertheless, put their sons to the competition for them, to determine their position, and I have understood, that when the scholarship has been won, such parents usually resign them for the benefit of the class for whom the institution was intended. In this way the competitive principle in its action affects most beneficially the whole of the surrounding education of the primary schools.* If

* To these favourable influences must be added the circumstance that of endowments which ensure parochial school-teachers of a condition above the average. The beneficial effects of these improved educational institutions on the economical and social condition of the population are strongly marked, as compared with others having institutions of a lower character. Amongst these effects none was more marked as attended with social advantages than the opening given by the competitive scholarships and the collegiate arrangements, for the admission and advancement of merit of every class. In the course of the examinations by the commissioners, Professor Forbes, of King's College, Aberdeen, was asked—"Are a great proportion of your students in a situation of pecuniary difficulty?"—"There are a great number of them that are, in fact, obliged to go home and work at farm labour, in order to enable them to come up the next session to college; and I have one gentleman in my eye, who, I am, sure, will be an honour to any profession that he enters upon, who was obliged to do so—that is, hold the plough, and to cut the harvest; and I scruple not to say that he is one of the best scholars that ever was within the walls of an university?"—"Do you consider it an advantage, that the system of university education should be so framed as to be thrown open to the lowest classes of society?"—"I do consider it a very first-rate advantage to this country for many reasons. Every one knows that in every situation of life at present it is extremely difficult to say in what way fathers are to employ their sons; and I believe it will be found upon calculation that he can as easily carry him through an university course as he can put him into a very small farm. I say it is of the greatest consequence to the community that it shall be so; for what is it that has raised Scotland to its high state of intellectual improvement? It is indeed the parochial schools; but it is the parochial schools, supplied with a set of men who have had a complete university education, and who are quite ready to go even into that depressed situation. And such is the abundance of young men in this country who have had a university education, that there is not a farmer who, if he is able to afford £15 or £20 a year, cannot have such a person to teach his family. At this moment, indeed, a great portion of the education of England is carried on by Scotch young men. I myself have recommended about 35 within these two years to go to London, who are all now employed, and many of them doing extremely well; and I am sure if any obstacle is thrown in the way of our young men, however poor, receiving such an education, the consequence will be that you will not have that choice of teachers in Scotland that you have at present; and what they are to do in England for qualified teachers, I believe it would be difficult to say, if they are not supplied from us."

to those schools were also given the advantage which is due to them, of competition for the lower class of appointments to the public service now given as corrupting and degrading political patronage, there would be conferred on education, and on the middle class of the population benefits the extent of which it is difficult to estimate.

On these particular advantages, and on the claims of the primary schools to the stimulus of open competitive examinations, for the public service, strong and unanimous feeling was expressed at the Educational Conference lately held in London, under the auspices of His Royal Highness Prince Albert, and it is to be hoped that the members of that conference will join in some measures for the prosecution of those claims.

VII.—*Important Collateral Results.—Conclusions.*

The full prevalence of the principle of open competition, will not be confined to the public service, but will affect beneficially the open professions and the private service market.

It has done so in France, where the prize scholars frequently get higher emoluments in commercial or private service than would be open to them in the service of the State. I have elsewhere stated that whilst it is to be repudiated as one of the most disastrous fallacies that passion or sinister interest has ever promulgated, that public administration, unlike private administration of smaller affairs, needs neither special aptitude nor study, and that, being incapable of principles as a practical art, unlike all practical arts, it may at once be undertaken by all people with almost equal success,—it should by all means be kept free from the sham science and mere craft which has been the bane of the administration of justice, and which it has been one great object of law reform to obliterate. I can speak from experience of the general worthlessness of Testimonials, and of the anxiety attendant on the use of the un-tested capacity for the performance of old and settled duties, much more of duties which are new and unsettled. The heads of commercial establishments are under the like perplexity, in being compelled to use service which they have no time or satisfactory means to examine.

Though we do not profess the competitive examination to be infallible, it approximates to a "Hall mark" of great practical value as commercial and manufacturing houses have testified in relation to the competitive examinations promoted by the Society of Arts. The proper official specialities are those which are common to private as well as public business, and are, for the most part, derivable from the best private practice, and, when further cultivated, will return contributions of improvements to that practice. By means of the competitive examinations, such contributions may be made highly important. There are now, for example, no examinations for the

professions undertaking large structural arrangements, and high titles to practice are often assumed by dangerous and wasteful empirics. If, in those works referred to, a successful course of practical instruction be laid down as a qualification for admission to the public service, and the evidence of successful practice be pre-appointed for the higher grades, and open competitive examinations in them be conducted in such a manner as to insure public confidence (as has been done in relation to the competitive examinations for certificates of competency from the School of Mines and for school teachers), it may be confidently expected that persons will be trained to the prescribed standards, and that the examinations will be resorted to for degrees or certificates as means of obtaining private engagements. A standard of nautical education, tested by competitive examination, for service in the Royal Navy, might be made supplemental to the examinations now instituted for the mercantile marine. For merchants and men in private business, who have no time to make textual examinations, for service in the Colonies, not to say in the United States, a certificate from a well known and responsible public board that a candidate had stood high in a competitive examination must often enable the possessor to emerge from the narrow circle of personal connexions, and serve as a valuable passport to private practice. The like certificates would be available for Accountantships and various branches of private business, for which there are now no common educational preparations; none however, that may not be easily surpassed by public arrangements.

The principles of public and private administration of property and business are often essentially the same. An improved administration of a public income has been found, for example, a good training for the administration of a private income. On a full consideration of the public requirements, I apprehend that there will be found occasion for examinations for various stages of progress in the specialities as well as in general qualifications. This measure will commend itself as one of humanity as well as economy, and it would provide that capacities of real worth may be early ascertained and receive confirmation and confident direction at stages of progress,—that grievous errors of unapplied or misapplied, or insufficient capacities may be early and decisively detected,—and that pupils may not be kept going on, some in mere idleness, others in courses for which they are the least fitted, consuming their time and the means of families, until the period when they might have gained a training in suitable occupations has closed, and rejection involves a total wreck, and grievous loss of money and hope. We have already had examples of the service of public examinations to private professions. In the Government School of Mines, first originated under the direction of my friend the late Sir Henry Delabèche, the training

of the pupils is tested by competitive examinations for certificates of competency. Under this stimulus their qualifications have been so well established, that hitherto all the pupils have obtained employment in the private service market. Although the commencing salaries offered were £150 per annum, more than double those of junior clerks, I am informed that none of the certificated pupils have hitherto been got to accept them. Competitive examinations for certificates of competency are now proceeding with good promise of success in the Government Schools of Practical Art, under the superintendence of Mr. Henry Cole and Dr. Lyon Playfair. I learn that the results of the training of female school teachers, tested by examinations, have been similar to those of the competitive examinations of the males for certificates of competency, but in another direction, which I mention for the edification of the ladies present. The females have been so far advanced in mental power and influence as to have been lost to the service by matrimonial engagements, obtained with exceeding rapidity. To avoid these losses, plainer candidates were selected for training, but they too have obtained preference as wives to a perplexing extent, and to the discontent of the heads of the schools, who are dissatisfied at being made ministers for training prize wives at the public expense for private individuals.

The short experience of such competitive examinations as have yet taken place, has already displayed indications of one important effect which will be produced, by the proper and extended application of the principle, namely, the discovery of rare and special aptitudes in obscure places; and amongst them of scientific aptitudes, in the development of which this association is particularly interested. In the course of the examinations of the classes at mechanics institutes, promoted by the Society of Arts, at the instance of Dr. Booth, who, I believe was the first to point out the importance of competitive examinations for testing Middle Class Education, there was found one young man, a grocer's shopman in a provincial town, who displayed remarkable aptitude for mathematics; such aptitudes as was needed for the scientific observations conducted under the direction of the Royal Society at the Observatory at Kew, where, as I am informed by Lord Wrottesley and by Mr. Gassiot, that he is now doing good service with those talents, which but for the duly notified open competition would in all probability have been lost to himself and society in the obscure situation in which they were found. From Dr. Kirkpatrick, I have an interesting letter of grateful acknowledgment for assistance rendered by him to a youth, who is attested by all his masters to be of remarkable power, the son of a poor carpenter in a remote part of Ireland, who after a desperately severe examination, has obtained a civil service appointment

in India. Amongst a majority of successful competitors from the Universities of England and Ireland, there was one who, as I am informed, is the son of a working blacksmith at Aberdeen. Such examples, if they are not sufficiently numerous to excite hopes amongst the many, have a high social and political importance in preventing misrepresentations, and subduing a banking belief of unjust and partial exclusions.

Politically speaking, the measure which I advocate, is only a procedure for the practical application of a constitutional principle, and for the maintenance of legal rights of the subject as well as the State established by early common law decisions, and by early statutory authority,* but overgrown by political corruptions, for the want of such a procedure for the maintenance of those rights as shall be self-acting. The competitive examination may be treated as an invention, which is an effectual guarantee for the maintenance of the rights of the subject to equality before the law, and the rights of the State to the best service. The concurrent views of well-informed and impartial persons in the paramount political impor-

* "By the 12th year of Richard II, cap. 2, none shall obtain offices by suit, or for reward, but upon desert." "Item: It is accorded that the Chancellor, Treasurer, Keeper of the Privy Seal, Steward of the King's House, the King's Chamberlain, Clerk of the Rolls, the Justices of the one Bench and of the other, Barons of the Exchequer, and all other that shall be called to ordain, name or make Justices of Peace, Sheriffs, Escheators, Customers, Comptrollers, or any other Officer or Minister of the King, shall be firmly sworn, that they shall not ordain, name, or make Justices of Peace, Sheriff, Escheator, Customer, Comptroller, nor other Officer nor Minister of the King for any gift or brokerage, favour or affection; nor that none which pursueth by him or by other, privily or openly, to be in any manner Office, shall be put in the same Office, or in any other; but that they make all such Officers and Ministers of the best and most lawful men, and sufficient to their estimation and knowledge."—St. 5, E. 6, cap. 16. Under this statute, in the year 1725, the Lord Chancellor was impeached, convicted, and fined £30,000, for having received presents; on which he established a plea of its being a custom of his predecessors—for appointments to Masterships in Chancery. "By the ancient common law, officers ought to be honest men, legal, and sage; *et qui melius sciant et possint officio illi intendere*, and this (says Lord Coke) was the policy of prudent antiquity, that officers did give grace to the place, and not the place grace to the officer."—*2nd Institute*. "Nor can anything be a greater discouragement to industry and virtue, than to see these places of trust and honour, which ought to be the rewards of those who by their industry have qualified themselves for them, conferred on such who can have no other recommendations but that of being the highest bidders."—*2nd Institute*, 1 to 8. "It is said to be *malum in se*, and indictable at common law."—The text book *Bacon's Abridgment, Title Offices*. "'Insufficiency'—which may, it is presumed, be relatively to another, for the public have a right to the best—'is an original incapacity which creates the forfeiture of an office. So if a superior puts in a deputy into an office, which may be exercised by deputy, who is ignorant and unskilful, this is a forfeiture of the office. If the King grants an office in any of the Courts of Westminster, the judges may remove such an officer for insufficiency.'"

tance of this measure, beyond most of the stock political questions of the day, may be best stated in the words of one of the chief philosophical writers of the age, an eminent member of the Indian Civil Service, Mr. John Stuart Mill, the author of the *Principles of Political Economy*:—

“The proposal to select candidates for the Civil Service of Government by a competitive examination appears to me to be one of those great public improvements, the adoption of which would form an era in history. The effects which it is calculated to produce in raising the character both of the public administration and of the people can scarcely be over-estimated. It has equal claims to support from the disinterested and impartial among conservatives and among reformers. For its adoption would be the best vindication which could be made of existing political institutions, by showing that the classes who under the present constitution have the greatest influence in the government, do not desire any greater share of the profits derivable from it than their merits entitle them to, but are willing to take the chances of competition with ability in all ranks : while the plan offers to liberals, so far as the plan extends, the realization of the principal object which any honest reformer desires to effect by political changes, namely, that the administration of public affairs should be in the most competent hands ; which, as regards the permanent part of the administrative body, would be ensured by the proposed plan, so far as it is possible for any human contrivance to secure it. When we add to this consideration the extraordinary stimulus which would be given to mental cultivation in its most important branches, not solely by the hope of prizes to be obtained by means of it, but by the effect of the national recognition of it as the exclusive title to participation in the conduct of so large and conspicuous a portion of the national affairs : and when we further think of the great and salutary moral revolution, descending to the minds of almost the lowest classes, which would follow the knowledge that Government (to people in general the most trusted exponent of the ways of the world) would henceforth bestow its gifts according to merit, and not to favour ; it is difficult to express in any language which would not appear exaggerated, the benefits which, as it appears to me, would ultimately be the consequences of the successful execution of the scheme.”

The support which the measure has received from eminent members of both the great parties, has placed it in the position of a neutral question ; I am however apprehensive that that is by no means a position of advantage, but one in which it is mutually neglected—in this case, there is too much reason to believe, in many instances, on mutual understandings. The statistics which I have adduced, showing how little has yet been done to comply with the public promise, indicate the extent of out-door exertions yet required to

ensure its realisation. Demonstrations are needed, from such associations as the present, and from the educational institutions of the country. To politicians the cause commends itself for other reasons than those above recited, and which may be more fittingly expounded elsewhere.

To parents then who are deeply interested in the success of that education which is to govern the destinies of their children, the cause of public competitive examinations commends itself as a means of ensuring the domestic peace and prosperity of their families, of influencing the minds of young persons by the constant presentation of peculiarly impressive examples of success achieved by diligence, and of failure attendant upon idleness and dissipation; and it also commends itself to parents as a means of testing for their selection the merits of schools. To tutors and educators of every class and degree, the cause of open public competitive examinations for the public service, and collaterally for the private service, commends itself for their exertions, as a security against the perversion of the minds of their pupils, as a means of sustaining the pupils' interest and cheerful attention and sympathies, and as an additional guarantee for the just appreciation of educational labours. Their exertions should be organised, and directed to the constituencies to promote self-denying resolutions against the continuance of Political Patronage, at the expense of the rights of individuals, of educators, and of the highest interests of the State.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

The preceding Paper, by Mr. Chadwick, may be justly regarded as one of the communications which excited the greatest interest at the Dublin Meeting (1857) of the British Association. The Section-room was crowded by a large and distinguished audience, and the discussion originated by the Paper was, with difficulty, confined within the limits of a day's proceedings. The President of the Section was His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin (Dr. Whately). There were also present the Lord Lieutenant (Earl of Carlisle), the Chief Baron of the Irish Exchequer, the Bishop of Cork, Baron Greene, Lord Monteagle, Judge Crampton, Dr. Daubeny, Mr. Napier, M.P., Mr. Whiteside, M.P., Mr. Lawson, Q.C., Dr. Graves, F.T.C.D., Mr. Recorder Hill, Mr. Edward Baines, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Gassiot, Mr. Robert Chambers, Professor Jellett, Dr. Hancock, Professor Cairnes, Dr. Dix Hutton, Dr. Strang, Mr. Haughton, Mr. Perry, Mr. Newmarch, and others.

In the course of the discussion Dr. Whately said that it might be acceptable to the Meeting if he were to mention two anecdotes in confirmation of some things that had been adverted to in the very important Paper which had been read. One of them related to the University of Oxford, and was a confirmation of Mr. Chadwick's remark on the great apathy which was produced by men finding that the way was plain for them without any exertion. In the Oxford Colleges, previous to the recent

reforms, there was a secure position on the Foundation for those who could prove themselves of the kin of the founder, and it was a common saying, as a recognized description of a slow or inferior person, that he was of "Founder's Kin," or almost a founder: *i.e.* a numskull. Another anecdote related to the Professorship of Political Economy in that University (Dublin), which, as they were aware, was established twenty-six years ago. The senior Fellow expressed some hesitation as to how they should proceed with the election, and he was assured by the late Provost Lloyd that some person suggested to them that the best course would be to elect a man, without entering at all into the details of the Science—that, in fact, they should elect a man of safe, *i.e.*, conservative principles. He advised them to throw that consideration overboard, and that the candidate should be selected according to Competitive Examination, which was done, and had been pursued ever since. There was always a very competent Professor appointed, and this was now one of the first schools of Political Economy in Europe.

The Meeting was further addressed by Mr. Napier, Q. C. ; by Mr. Whiteside, Q. C. ; by Mr. M. D. Hill, the Recorder of Birmingham ; by Mr. Baines ; by Mr. Evelyn ; by Dr. Graves ; by Mr. Kavanagh, the Inspector of Schools ; and by Mr. Crawford, late Governor of Singapore.

It is not the practice of Sections of the British Association to adopt formal Resolutions as the offspring of discussions arising out of Papers read. On this occasion, however, the Committee* of the Section (F), felt that it would be a legitimate and useful course to place on record in the Minutes of the Section an entry descriptive of the proceedings and results of the day. On the following morning, therefore, (1st Sept., 1857,) the Committee adopted the following Minute on the Motion of Mr. Newmarch, viz. :—

"The Committee of Section F feel themselves specially called upon to advert to the proceedings of yesterday, (Monday, August 31st, 1857,) at the Meeting of the Section in connection with the Paper by Mr. Chadwick on Competitive Examinations. The Section was presided over by His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin,—it was attended by a considerable number of persons of eminence, including men of all persuasions and parties—and the Section-room was filled with an attentive audience. His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant was also present during a large part of the proceedings. The Paper by Mr. Chadwick entered largely and fully into the whole question of Competitive Examinations, and in the course of the protracted and animated discussion which ensued, nearly every part of the subject, practical and theoretical, was examined in great detail. As the general result of the whole proceedings, it appears to the Committee of the Section that it is incumbent upon them to record the following Minute, viz. :—

"That it was fully manifested by the proceedings of yesterday as the clear and strong opinion of the Meeting of Section F, then held, that in the settlement of the plan of Competitive Examinations for Employment in the Public Service of the Home Government, of India, and the Colonies, the basis of the whole should be the principle of Open Competition—meaning, by Open Competition, the admission of all Candidates who, subject to a few simple preliminaries, may present themselves for Examination, excluding, therefore, any settlement of the List of Candidates by mere Patronage Nomination."

* The names of the Committee of Section F will be found in the last volume of the *Journal*, (xx., p. 429).